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Docudrama about city wins at film festival



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PORT ST. LUCIE - The dream continues to come true for the docudrama, "City of Dreams."

It received two awards at the end of the Treasure Coast International Film Festival on April 30, the concluding evening of the city's weeklong 50th anniversary celebration.

Right before the fireworks that closed out the week-long anniversary celebration started, Richard McAfoos, president of the St. Lucie Historical Society, heard the docudrama, which was shot to commemorate the city's 50th anniversary and was shown to the public for the first time on April 27 during anniversary festivities, won "Best Documentary" and "Best Theme Song."

"We're thrilled," Mr. McAfoos said.

He wore many hats while making the docudrama, from executive producer to co-director.

"We knew we have a tremendous product in the movie and video, but to be recognized by industry peers is the greatest compliment of all."

The historical society and city partnered in 2007 to create the docudrama, which covers the city's history. In November 2008, the historical society contracted with Treasure Coast Films to make the docudrama for \$80,000.

Also included in the price were a music video and a 5-minute promotional reel for marketing and tourism.

Preproduction began in December 2009 under producers Jose Garofalo and Robert Roblan.

The final product contains many clips of oral histories the historical society gathered and reenacted historical events, such as the 1961 ribbon cutting that opened the city.

One of the unique things about the docudrama is that almost all of the people who worked to put it together live in Port St. Lucie.

"It shows the depth of the incredible talent that is right here in Port St. Lucie," Mr. McAfoos said.

Mark Barnes, a Port St. Lucie resident, wrote the theme song, "City Within a Dream." The song arrangement was by Robert Navarro, also a Port St. Lucie resident, and Alana Ferraro, a Port St. Lucie High School student, performs the song. The Holy Family Church children's choir sings back up in the video.

This was the fourth year for the Treasure Coast Film Festival. The film industry peers who voted were from a cross section of people who work in the film industry. The docudrama was in direct competition with more than 50 other entries in various categories from all over the world.

The next stop for the docudrama is for it to be submitted at the next level of competition, which will take it to major metropolitan markets.

"The producers of the project created it solely as a tribute to Port St. Lucie and its people past and present," Mr. McAfoos said. "Any recognition it receives is greatly favorable in spreading the message of what a wonderful place Port St. Lucie really is."